

CLAIMS

1 1. An information handling system comprising

2 A a plurality of information works, at least one information work including information and
3 a work control module configured to facilitate accessing the information, at least one other
4 information work including at least information, the work control module being further
5 configured to establish at least one cross-reference between the at least one information work
6 and the other information work;

7 B. at least one application; and

8 C. a reverse cross-reference control subsystem configured to, in response to a user initiating use
9 of the at least one cross-reference, determine whether the at least one cross-reference is
10 associated with the at least one application, and, if so, initiate processing of the at least one
11 application.

1 2. An information handling system as defined in claim 1 further comprising:

2 A. a cross-reference establishment module configured to establish said at least one cross-
3 reference; and

4 B. an application association module configured to generate application association information
5 in response to the establishment by the cross-reference establishment module of said at least
6 one cross-reference for use by the reverse cross-reference control subsystem.

1 3. An information handling system as defined in claim 2 in which the cross-reference establishment
2 module is configured to use information provided by the user in connection with establishing the at
3 least one cross-reference.

1 4. An information handling system as defined in claim 2 in which the cross-reference establishment
2 module is configured to use information provided by the at least one information work control
3 module in connection with establishing the at least one cross-reference.

1 5. An information handling system as defined in claim 1 in which the at least one application is
2 configured to provide call information to the reverse cross-reference control subsystem, the reverse
3 cross-reference control subsystem being configured to use the call information in determining
4 whether the at least one cross-reference is associated with the at least one application.

1 6. An information handling system as defined in claim 1 in which the reverse cross-reference control
2 module comprises:

3 A. a context library identifying, if the at least one application is associated with the cross-
4 reference identified in the cross-reference register, the at least one application associated
5 therewith; and

6 C. a cross-reference control subsystem control module configured to, in response to the user
7 initiating use of the cross-reference associated with the entry, initiate processing of the
8 application associated therewith as identified by the context library.

1 7. An information handling system as defined in claim 6 in which the reverse cross-reference control
2 module further comprises a cross-reference register comprising at least one entry associated with the
3 cross-reference, the entry providing source information identifying the information work for which
4 the cross-reference was created and target information identifying the other information work, the
5 cross-reference control subsystem control module being further configured to use the information

6 in the cross-reference register and information provided by the at least one application to determine
7 whether the at least one application is to be associated with the respective cross-reference and, if so,
8 provide information thereto to the context library.

1 8. An information handling method for use in connection with an information handling system
2 comprising a plurality of information works, at least one information work including information
3 and a work control module configured to facilitate accessing the information, at least one other
4 information work including at least information, the work control module being further configured
5 to establish at least one cross-reference between the at least one information work and the other
6 information work, and at least one application, the method comprising the steps of:

7 A. in response to a user initiating use of the at least one cross-reference, determining whether
8 the at least one cross-reference is associated with the at least one application,

9 B. in response to a positive determination, initiating processing of the at least one application.

1 9. An information method system as defined in claim 8 further comprising the steps of:

2 A. establishing said at least one cross-reference; and

3 B. generating application association information in response to the establishment of said at
4 least one cross-reference.

1 10. An information handling method as defined in claim 9 in which the cross-reference establishment
2 step includes the step of using information provided by the user in connection with establishing the
3 at least one cross-reference.

1 12. An information handling method as defined in claim 9 in which the cross-reference establishment
2 step includes the step of using information provided by the at least one information work control
3 module in connection with establishing the at least one cross-reference.

1 13. An information handling method as defined in claim 8 in which the at least one application is
2 configured to provide call information to the reverse cross-reference control subsystem, the
3 association determination step including the step of using the call information in determining
4 whether the at least one cross-reference is associated with the at least one application.

1 14. A computer program product for use in connection with a computer to provide an information
2 handling system, the computer further providing a plurality of information works, at least one
3 information work including information and a work control module configured to facilitate accessing
4 the information, at least one other information work including at least information, the work control
5 module being further configured to establish at least one cross-reference between the at least one
6 information work and the other information work and at least one application, the computer program
7 product comprising a computer readable medium having encoded thereon:

8 A. a cross-reference association determination module configured to enable the computer to
9 determine, in response to a user initiating use of the at least one cross-reference, whether the
10 at least one cross-reference is associated with the at least one application,

11 B. an application processing initiation module configured to enable the computer to, in response
12 to a positive determination, initiate processing of the at least one application.

1 15. A computer program product as defined in claim 14 in which the cross-reference association
2 determination module includes:

- 3 A. a context library module configured to enable the computer to establish a context library for
4 identifying, if the at least one application is associated with the cross-reference identified in
5 the cross-reference register, the at least one application associated therewith; and
- 6 C. a cross-reference control subsystem control module configured to enable the computer to,
7 in response to the user initiating use of the cross-reference associated with the entry, use the
8 contents of the context library to determine whether the at least one application is associated
9 with the cross-reference.

1 16. A computer program product as defined in claim 15 further including a cross-reference register
2 module configured to enable the computer to establish a cross-reference register comprising at least
3 one entry associated with the cross-reference, the entry providing source information identifying the
4 information work for which the cross-reference was created and target information identifying the
5 other information work, the cross-reference control subsystem control module being further
6 configured to enable the computer to use the information in the cross-reference register and
7 information provided by the at least one application to determine whether the at least one application
8 is to be associated with the respective cross-reference and, if so, provide information thereto to the
9 context library.

1 17. An information handling system comprising

- 2 A. at least one workflow flow chart;
- 3 B. at least one information work associated with the at least one workflow flow chart; and
- 4 C. a control module configured to initiate usage by a user of the workflow flow chart in
5 response to a request therefor from the user while the user is utilizing the at least one
6 information work.

1 18. An information handling system as defined in claim 18 further comprising a display device and
2 a user input device, the control module being configured to enable at least a portion of the at least
3 one information work to be displayed on the display device and, in response to user input received
4 through the user input device, enable at least a portion of the workflow flow chart to be displayed
5 on the display device, thereby to enable the user to utilize the workflow flow chart.

1 19. An information handling system as defined in claim 18 in which the user input device includes
2 a control button actuation of which enables the control module to enable said at least a portion of the
3 workflow flow chart to be displayed.

1 20. An information handling system as defined in claim 18 in which the information work comprises
2 at least one actuatable indicia actuation of which through input provided through the user input device
3 enables the control module to enable said at least a portion of the workflow flow chart to be
4 displayed.

1 21. An information handling system as defined in claim 18, the information handling system having
2 a plurality of workflow flow charts associated with the information work, the control module being
3 configured to, in response to user input received through the user input device, enable a list of
4 workflow flow charts that are associated with the at least one information work to be displayed, and,
5 in response to user input received through the user input device selecting one of the listed workflow
6 flow charts to enable said at least a portion of the workflow flow chart to be displayed on said
7 display device.

1 22. An information handling system as defined in claim 17 in which the at least one workflow flow
2 chart comprises a plurality of nodes organized in a tree structure, each node being one of a plurality
3 of types, including a query type, a user input type and an information type, the nodes being
4 organized in a tree structure such that at least one node of the query type has at least one child node
5 of the user input type and at least one node of the user input type has at least one node of the
6 information type, each node of the query type presenting a query to the user, each node of the user
7 input type receiving user input from a user in response to the query presented in its parent node and
8 comparing the user input to a selected criterion, and selectively enabling its child node to provide
9 predetermined information to the user.

1 23. An information handling system as defined in claim 22 in which the at least one workflow flow
2 chart is defined by a meta traversal map, the meta traversal map comprising a map entry associated
3 with each node of the at least one workflow flow chart, each entry containing indicia that identifies
4 the node type of the node associated with the map entry, map entries associated with any parent or
5 child map node that is associated with the entry's map node, in the case of a map node of the query
6 or information node type, the query or information to be provided to the user, and, in the case of a
7 map node of the input user type, the selected criterion, the control module being configured to use
8 the respective entries in the meta traversal map and the user input in traversing the at least one
9 workflow flow chart.

1 24. An information handling system as defined in claim 23 in which information to be provided by
2 at least one map node of the information node type includes information from the at least one
3 information work, the at least one map node including a link identifying the information from the
4 at least one information work to be provided in connection therewith, the control module being
5 further configured to use the link in connection with providing the information from the at least one
6 information work to the user when the at least one map node is encountered in traversing the metal
7 traversal map.

1 25. An information handling system as defined in claim 23 further comprising a second information
2 work, and in which information to be provided by at least one node of the information node type
3 includes information from the second information work, the at least one map node including a link
4 identifying the information from the second information work to be provided in connection
5 therewith, the control module being further configured to use the link in connection with providing
6 the information from the second information work to the user when the at least one map node is
7 encountered in traversing the metal traversal map.

1 26. An information handling method comprising the steps of:

- 2 A. providing at least one workflow flow chart;
- 3 B. providing at least one information work associated with the at least one workflow flow chart;
4 and
- 5 C. initiating usage by a user of the workflow flow chart in response to a request therefor from
6 the user while the user is utilizing the at least one information work.

1 27. An information handling method as defined in claim 26 in which the usage initiating step
2 includes the steps of

- 3 A. receiving selected user input associated with the at last one information work; and
- 4 B. in response to the selected user input, enabling at least a portion of the workflow flow chart
5 to be displayed to the user, thereby to enable the user to utilize the workflow flow chart.

1 28. An information handling method as defined in claim 27 in which the selected user input
2 receiving step includes the step of receiving an indication of actuation of a control button actuation
3 associated with a user input device.

1 29. An information handling method as defined in claim 27 in which the selected user input
2 receiving step includes the step of receiving an indication of actuation of actuatable indicia associated
3 with the at least one information work.

1 30. An information handling method as defined in claim 27 further including the step of providing
2 at least a second workflow flow chart with which the at least one information work is associated, the
3 selected user input receiving step including the steps of:

- 4 A. enabling a list of workflow flow charts that are associated with the at least one information
5 work to be displayed in response to user input received through the user input device; and
- 6 B. in response to user input received through the user input device selecting one of the listed
7 workflow flow charts to enable said at least a portion of the workflow flow chart to be
8 displayed.

1 31. An information handling method as defined in claim 26 in which the at least one workflow flow
2 chart comprises a plurality of nodes organized in a tree structure, each node being one of a plurality
3 of types, including a query type, a user input type and an information type, the nodes being
4 organized in a tree structure such that at least one node of the query type has at least one child node
5 of the user input type and at least one node of the user input type has at least one node of the
6 information type, each node of the query type presenting a query to the user, each node of the user
7 input type receiving user input from a user in response to the query presented in its parent node and
8 comparing the user input to a selected criterion, and selectively enabling its child node to provide

9 predetermined information to the user, the method further comprising the step of traversing the at
10 least one workflow flow chart in response to user input evaluated by respective nodes of the user
11 input type.

1 32. An information handling method as defined in claim 31 in which the at least one workflow flow
2 chart is defined by a meta traversal map, the meta traversal map comprising a map entry associated
3 with each node of the at least one workflow flow chart, each entry containing indicia that identifies
4 the node type of the node associated with the map entry, map entries associated with any parent or
5 child map node that is associated with the entry's map node, in the case of a map node of the query
6 or information node type, the query or information to be provided to the user, and, in the case of a
7 map node of the input user type, the selected criterion, the traversing step including the step of using
8 the respective entries in the meta traversal map and the user input in traversing the at least one
9 workflow flow chart.

1 33. An information handling method as defined in claim 32 in which information to be provided by
2 at least one map node of the information node type includes information from the at least one
3 information work, the at least one map node including a link identifying the information from the
4 at least one information work to be provided in connection therewith, the traversing step including
5 the step of using the link in connection with providing the information from the at least one
6 information work to the user when the at least one map node is encountered in traversing the metal
7 traversal map.

1 34. An information handling method as defined in claim 32 further comprising the step of providing
2 a second information work, information to be provided by at least one node of the information node
3 type including information from the second information work, the at least one map node including
4 a link identifying the information from the second information work to be provided in connection

5 therewith, the traversing step including the step of use the link in connection with providing the
6 information from the second information work to the user when the at least one map node is
7 encountered in traversing the metal traversal map.

1 35. A computer program product for use in connection with a computer to provide an information
2 handling system, the computer having at least one workflow flow chart and at least one information
3 work associated with the at least one workflow flow chart, the computer program product comprising
4 a computer readable medium having encoded thereon

5 A. a selected user input receiver module configured to enable the computer to receive selected
6 user input associated with the at last one information work; and

7 B. a workflow flow chart utilization module configured to enable the computer to, in response
8 to the selected user input, enable a user to utilize the workflow flow chart.

1 36. A computer program product as defined in claim 34, the computer comprising a display device
2 and a user input device, computer displaying at least a portion of the at least one information work
3 on the display device and, the selected user input receiver module being configured to enable the
4 computer to enable the computer to receive the selected user input through the user input device, the
5 workflow flow chart utilization module being configured to enable at least a portion of the workflow
6 flow chart to be displayed on the display device, thereby to enable the user to utilize the workflow
7 flow chart.

1 37 A computer program product as defined in claim 36 in which the user input device includes a
2 control button actuation of which enables the workflow flow chart utilization module to enable said
3 at least a portion of the workflow flow chart to be displayed.

1 38. A computer program product as defined in claim 36 in which the information work comprises
2 at least one actuatable indicia actuation of which enables the workflow flow chart utilization module
3 to enable said at least a portion of the workflow flow chart to be displayed.

1 39. A computer program product as defined in claim 36, the computer being provided with a
2 plurality of workflow flow charts associated with the information work, the selected user input
3 receiver module further being configured to enable the computer to, in response to user input
4 received through the user input device, enable a list of workflow flow charts that are associated with
5 the at least one information work to be displayed, and, in response to user input received through the
6 user input device selecting one of the listed workflow flow charts, the workflow flow chart
7 utilization module enabling said at least a portion of the workflow flow chart to be displayed on said
8 display device.

1 40. A computer program product as defined in claim 35 in which the at least one workflow flow
2 chart comprises a plurality of nodes organized in a tree structure, each node being one of a plurality
3 of types, including a query type, a user input type and an information type, the nodes being
4 organized in a tree structure such that at least one node of the query type has at least one child node
5 of the user input type and at least one node of the user input type has at least one node of the
6 information type, each node of the query type presenting a query to the user, each node of the user
7 input type receiving user input from a user in response to the query presented in its parent node and
8 comparing the user input to a selected criterion, and selectively enabling its child node to provide
9 predetermined information to the user, the workflow flow chart utilization module being configured
10 to enable the computer to, in turn, traverse the nodes of the workflow flow chart in response to user
11 input provided through the respective nodes of the user input type.

1 41. A computer program product as defined in claim 40 in which the at least one workflow flow
2 chart is defined by a meta traversal map, the meta traversal map comprising a map entry associated
3 with each node of the at least one workflow flow chart, each entry containing indicia that identifies
4 the node type of the node associated with the map entry, map entries associated with any parent or
5 child map node that is associated with the entry's map node, in the case of a map node of the query
6 or information node type, the query or information to be provided to the user, and, in the case of a
7 map node of the input user type, the selected criterion, the workflow flow chart utilization module
8 being configured to enable the computer to use the respective entries in the meta traversal map and
9 the user input in traversing the at least one workflow flow chart.

1 42. A computer program product as defined in claim 41 in which information to be provided by at
2 least one map node of the information node type includes information from the at least one
3 information work, the at least one map node including a link identifying the information from the
4 at least one information work to be provided in connection therewith, the workflow flow chart
5 utilization module being further configured to enable the computer to use the link in connection with
6 providing the information from the at least one information work to the user when the at least one
7 map node is encountered in traversing the metal traversal map.

1 43. A computer program product as defined in claim 41 further comprising a second information
2 work, and in which information to be provided by at least one node of the information node type
3 includes information from the second information work, the at least one map node including a link
4 identifying the information from the second information work to be provided in connection
5 therewith, the workflow flow chart utilization module being further configured to enable the
6 computer to use the link in connection with providing the information from the second information
work to the user when the at least one map node is encountered in traversing the metal traversal map.